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BY E. PAYNE

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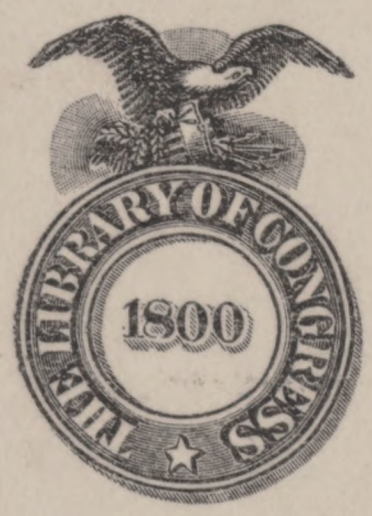

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VIOLA LIVINGSTONE

OR

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

BY

MARY E. PAYNE

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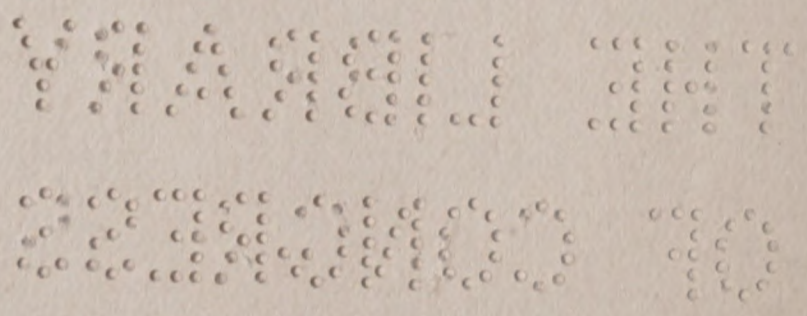

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VIOLA LIVINGSTONE.

CHAPTER I.

LORD SINCLAIR.

NEW YORK CITY abounds in beautiful women. You cannot walk a square without encountering one or more of them.

To be sure, some are of a more exalted type than others, with a regal air and queenly bearing, that make them the superior of other women, physically, mentally and morally.

Viola Livingstone belonged to the latter class —a lovely creature, born to sway the destinies of others by her womanliness and innate goodness of heart.

Her hair was so golden that the very rays of sunshine seemed to pale before it, eyes as blue

and true as the heavens, skin as white as alabaster, and cheeks as red as twin roses. Add to this perfection of form and feature, and do you wonder that people turned around to take a second glance at the lovely face and figure?

Her mother had watched over this beautiful creature until she had come to perfection, then naturally looked around to secure for her a suitable husband. That her daughter would be unequally yoked was something she could never for a moment think of.

At last her eye lit upon Lord Sinclair. He must surely be the completion of her daughter's being. He was a pompous man. If greatness consists in size, Lord Sinclair was a great man. Of one of the oldest families in Europe, he was said to be a lineal descendant of kings and queens.

But Lord Sinclair must live his own life and eke out his own fate. He came, saw, conquered, was the opinion of the world.

But, alas! Viola did not wear her heart upon her sleeve.

Her mother and lover attributed it to her

modesty if she was a little quiet or self-possessed.

Viola possessed a vast fortune in her own right. Was this the golden bait that attracted Lord Sinclair?

Certain it was, as she was nearing her majority, and about to come into possession of it, he redoubled his attentions to her.

He presented her with mammoth bouquets of her favorite flowers, fresh with the dews of nature. Ah! if he could have seen how much more beautiful Viola was when she was natural, would he have wanted to substitute anything artificial in heart or mind?

Naturally she was straightforward, truthful, open, but if she now resorted to any little subterfuges or stratagems it was because she could not adapt herself to circumstances as many another person might have done.

Lord Sinclair was good looking, commanding in person. Always sure of the mastery in every undertaking in life, he did not expect to be daunted in this. Her beauty dazzled him as the sun dazzles the eye, but he meant to get

possession of it, as the astronomer means finally to know all the ins and outs of that volcanic world.

"Women are always fond of titles," said he. "Give them a title or high sounding name and they will let go of everything else, and I am sure Viola is no exception."

He brought rich carriages to take her to the theatre, but after all this display she could not but think his invitations were threadbare, and that money wanted was written all over his clothing and equipages. Her mother seemed more delighted than any one else with these invitations.

"My dear," she said to Viola, "I want you to treat Lord Sinclair with the greatest respect and deference; he is the greatest catch of the season."

"If so," thought Viola, "what small fry there must be in the social waters."

But Viola went with him because her mother ordered it, and if outward signs are any indication her mother will win the game and make Viola his wife, if in name only.

Lord Sinclair had come over from England to "do" the continent, till the beauty of Viola had acted like a loadstone, and he was riveted to the spot.

"Madamoiselle is so lovely," said he, "I cannot leave her to see the great charms of nature."

He plied his art of love making well. He praised her music, her painting, her drawing. Indeed he was sure mademoiselle would have made an artist if she had been born in the old country, she had such an eye for the beautiful, and with the teaching of some of the old masters would have shone in the galleries of fame.

He is so polished, so refined, so gentlemanly, perhaps after all he is a genuine gem, and not an imitation. It is hard sometimes to tell one from the other. At any rate, it is always pleasanter to think we are in possession of the genuine, and we will think so of him unless he should prove himself to the contrary.

So Lord Sinclair made love, and if Viola's heart did not beat time to it, he was none the wiser. He thought she was the shyest little

rosebud that he had ever come across, and if she blushed and hid her head away he was all the more flattered. He did not know that she was trying to hide away from him, lest by some means, fair or foul, he might, unforeseen, pluck her from the parent stem.

Alas! we often admire the loveliness of something without thinking whether we are worthy to come into possession of it or not.

So it was with Sinclair. Viola lived in another world from him, so to speak; in an intellectual atmosphere to which he had never attained. His physical nature was as much as he could attend to; his suppers, his wines, his cigars, his fashionable attire, his pleasure at theatre and opera was enough for one person to attend to.

Yet when he was in one of his more spiritual moods he would have given worlds to have shaken off the dross, and soar in the pure element where Viola basked in the smiles of heaven.

Ah! if he had but known. Love is something that cannot grow in low places. It needs

something high and elevating for it to take root. So to make love to Viola he would have to go up where she was, for he could never bring her down to his level.

CHAPTER II.

AT THE SEASHORE.

SUMMER came around with its trailing robe of emeralds, and scent of flowers. All nature seemed in for a frolic, from bird and bee down to the tiniest insects that crawl.

Happiness is something that seems to pervade the summer air. The clouds seem but the drapery of heaven swung out to the pure breeze.

The earth had awakened from its dormant sleep of winter, and clothed itself anew. The waterfall and cataract seemed to bring new life in their train. The golden air is saturated with the perfume of myriads of flowers that are arranged as artistically as any artist could do.

What a place for love's young dream to be realized.

But the chief attraction seems to be at the seashore, perhaps because old ocean never tires singing its love songs.

It was decided that Viola should go to the seashore, and Lord Sinclair had gained permission to accompany her.

"It will look so pious like to have a lord with us," said the mother, "and I never like to have Viola unaccompanied by one of the male sex. It gives a chance for strangers to force themselves upon you, whether you want them or not."

Sinclair was in the swim nearly all the time, if he was not in the water. His name was floating in all the country newspapers as the great Lord Berkley Sinclair, of London, England.

But a prophet is not without honor, save in his own country, and in his own house, and so perhaps it is with a lord.

Newport was one of the most fashionable resorts of the day, and thither they went.

Now it was crowded with the ultra-fashionable set from New York and the surrounding cities, and Mrs. Livingstone's in her element.

To move in the upper strata, surrounded by the *élite* was all she asked for. To see and be seen, idolized, admired, she seemed to forget everything but self, and the roseate prospects of Viola. Love was to her an unknown language. She basked in society's smile and was content to be society's queen.

Alas! how many of the rich go down to the seashore to wash off the veneer of fashionable society, to get rid of the canker of discontent, to bask in the waves with the commoner, forgetful for the time being of the difference in station.

Its broad breast is spread out before you like a sea of polished gold, as the sun glints over it.

Viola loved to watch it, hoping she might see from this vast mirror some bright picture of her future reflected. She loved old ocean, and would it give back love for love?

As the sun shines on it it seems to be cov-

ered with innumerable jewels, that sparkle and glitter, as if the Great Author had spread out all of his treasures there for the eye to feast upon.

Viola was more lovely than ever in these days.

"See how much in love she is," says her mother; "she does not seem to notice her would-be-admirers. I knew it would be that way when Lord Sinclair decided to accompany us."

There is nothing like good company to keep away bad, and the mother rouged her cheeks and an added sparkle seemed to shine in her eye.

You would think that she was fixing up for Sinclair herself, and it must be said that she had to do a good deal of the courting. To see her daughter "fixed" in society's upper kingdom, a lady of high rank, moving among peers and dukes, was her highest aim and purpose. Surely love would grow among such surroundings.

Not so thought Viola. Her very heart

strings might break, but she would never yield one iota to her mother's capitulations. She rejoiced in her freedom like bird or butterfly, and would never be taken captive while she could elude her pursuers. If it came to the worst she would run away. She had an uncle and aunt living in another State, and they would gladly welcome her.

During her childhood their families had exchanged visits, and Viola remembered them with the greatest affection.

Uncle Walter, her father's brother, was a fine specimen of a country gentleman; tall, broad shouldered, well proportioned, he was, as she remembered him, her ideal of a man.

Lord Sinclair was too dumpy, too broad, without proportionate height.

Aunt Meta had a lovely face, soft and gentle, with dimples in cheeks and chin, and hair almost golden as her own.

Viola's mother had not mentioned their names to her in years. She did not believe in keeping up the acquaintance of poor relations, especially country people. She could not

endure their awkward ways and unkempt manners; besides, if you kept in touch with them they were liable to come upon you in the midst of some fashionable *fête,* and spoil all of your pleasure.

They might be so forward as to come down to Viola's wedding, when they heard about it, and what would Sinclair think, if she permitted it, of such commonplace relations.

No, she would run no such risk. They were so far away he would never know of their existence, and she hoped Viola would in time forget them.

But Viola could not forget so easily. She remembered their kindness in former years, how her heart, longing for some one to bestow its affection upon, had gone out to them; and to their home she would flee if it came to the worst.

Viola was revolving the question in her mind, her face flushed with anger, and the woman in her fury was something different from the calm Viola who appeared at tea time in lavender silk and white lace.

"He shall not know that I suffer," she said. "If I die I mean to die game."

"As I went to take her hand to-night," said Sinclair, "she actually repulsed me. When she's my lady, I'll show her who is master."

CHAPTER III.

VIOLA AT HOME.

VIOLA'S was one of the most luxurious homes in upper Fifth avenue. Her father, a prosperous broker, had died several years before the opening of our story and left his widow and daughter in affluent circumstances.

The former had donned widow's weeds and wept copiously, but the fountain of her tears had about dried up when Lord Sinclair appeared upon the scene.

"How fortunate," said she, "that I am over my trouble, for young men do not like to visit a house where people are in trouble."

And what reason had Viola for disliking him? He was politeness itself, and could converse as fluently as any one in her set. We, all of us, meet people in the course of our livcs

that we dislike from the outset. I suppose it is from intuition, and so perhaps it was in Sinclair's case.

She had persuaded her mother when summer came to take her to the seashore, not thinking that he would have the audacity to accompany her without an invitation from herself.

He was boldness itself. Surely if that is anything in his favor he will win her.

He had determined to make New York his home for the present, and was prominent at all the balls and soirees during the winter.

"Mademoiselle is a lovely dancer," he said to Viola, "so graceful, so ethereal, she hardly seems to touch the floor; so spirituelle that I am afraid to lose my hold of her, lest she should disappear altogether," while to himself he remarked, "When I find a golden bird I mean to capture it. Of course it may not be willing, but what's the odds; the music is just the same, and any one is willing to sing to the tune of two million dollars any day, and I hear that is what she is worth."

The winter's campaign was a very brilliant

one. There were debutantes, and those about taking leave of life's stage, a conglomeration of wealth and beauty, belles and beaux, like the shaking up of numbers in a box, seeing who would draw the prize.

But the race is not always to the swift, nor the battle to the strong—so Lord Sinclair found out.

Could any one so beautiful as Viola appear without causing a buzz of admiration? She was the center of attraction, and she sparkled and dazzled all around her. Place a diamond among a lot of opaque bodies, and will it not illumine them? The undue excitement that Viola was undergoing, owing to Lord Sinclair's attentions, made her more willing to receive the attentions of other men.

"It is singular," he said, "how many men Viola knows."

It was because her father had been so widely known in business circles.

Shall we say the fire of jealousy burned in Lord Sinclair's breast? We never appreciate anything so much as when other people begin

to do so, and now her beauty maddened him. He would crush her before he would see her the wife of another.

Viola was out of her element when she was away with him during the summer; now she was in her element. Men of culture, breeding —intellectual kings—were her companions, and Viola's wit sparkled and shone as foam upon a goblet.

"I never knew the woman was so smart," Lord Sinclair said, "but she shall not be too smart for me."

When he was married to her he would take her down a peg or two. Then he would have his revenge, if not before.

How dare these ordinary people step in between him and the gold he coveted. And he found Viola's mother a willing accomplice. If she could ally herself anyway to a lord she was going to do so, so she would force him into Viola's company at times when she was not aware of his presence.

"It will be so high sounding," she said, "to be called Lady Sinclair's mother. What harm

if I tell a few lies in rising to the station. Viola is surely drooping. She seems so depressed. It is all for want of a proper appreciation of her future station. To think of moving among the nobility of England and Germany is enough to make any girl look anxious. But after the marriage and bridal trip are over, she will revive like some sweet flower that has been scorched by too much sun. She will enter into their enjoyments as one of them, and I, of course, will be treated with the greatest respect and deference.

"No, I cannot let this chance go over. It is like flying in the face of Providence. Lord Sinclair has come all the way from Britain to find a bride, and no more beautiful woman lives in either continent than Viola. She is so like me when I was young," and if pink cheeks, scarlet lips and a white skin are any indications she had renewed her youth.

"If Viola sticks to it and refuses him I shall try to get him myself," she said.

"I suppose you intend to keep him in the family, like some old heirloom or relic," said

Viola, sarcastically, who had entered the room unawares.

"Do not make a fool of yourself," said the mother, turning upon her. "Any girl in New York would jump at the chance, but you seem to have lost your wits."

"I must look to my heart for the answer, mother, and my heart always says 'nay'!"

"If your heart were right it would say 'yes,'" said the ambitious mother.

When Sinclair called that evening Viola's cheeks were as red as two damask roses.

If Sinclair has any heart at all he will surely fall in love with the *woman* to-night; he will let go of all mercenary motives and worship at her feet. The excitement of the day has made her intensely beautiful, as her mother's words of the afternoon still rang in her ears as an unsavory message.

CHAPTER IV.

AT THE OPERA.

In the course of the evening Lord Sinclair said:

"Mademoiselle, Patti will sing to-morrow night, and I want mademoiselle to accompany me. She is a lovely singer, and it will be like soul answering soul for mademoiselle to hear her. I remember," he said, "how lovely mademoiselle used to sing at the seashore, until the waves caught the melody and added a sweet refrain."

When she departed for the concert the following evening, her mother said:

"You look your best, Viola. Lord Sinclair is sure to ask you to-night to become his wife. If you accept him you have my blessing; if not, *my curse shall fall on you for life.*"

Viola thought how dreadful her mother looked as she uttered these words. A mother's curse is something dreadful to fall upon you, even though that mother has been selfish, worldly minded, always seeking some emolument of the flesh.

Viola was the very hope she built upon. Fair as adamant or crystal, Mrs. Livingstone would let her barter her soul for a title, but she must save herself, and to-night the opportunity would be hers. She would go with Lord Sinclair, but she would not stay to see the opera over. She would feign illness, and so get home early and gain time. A violent headache was sufficient excuse for her to be brought home an hour earlier, and indeed her head ached as well as her heart. Her mother would suspect nothing, would think she was in the company of Sinclair.

And so the mother went to sleep and dreamed he was her son-in-law, and that a coronet rested on her own head. Alas! her golden

dreams, like many another's, came to naught, for when she awoke in the morning she had no son-in-law and was also minus her daughter.

CHAPTER V.

VIOLA TAKES FLIGHT.

"VIOLA is taking a long sleep," said her mother, "and it will do her good, for I am sure that her fate was decided last night."

Alas! it was decided, but in a very different way from what her mother supposed. Instead of dreaming of diamonds and the glittering gems that make up all the light that some poor creatures in the upper stations have, she was borne as a waif on the tide of humanity—whither?

Ah! it is dreadful to be out in the world without a destination. She had bribed the coachman, and he had taken her to the station immediately after Sinclair's departure.

Her uncle and aunt, living in Vermont, had worshiped Viola in her childhood, until her

mother had by her frivolousness driven them from her, and they had gone to the Green Mountain State.

Simple in their tastes, nature always looked to them more inviting than art. What is art but an imitation of nature? If there never had been any nature there never would have been any art. So they clung to the original as the handiwork of God.

Thither Viola was tending, as she sped on her way like some nestling driven from its nest. She fluttered and trembled, but there was a purpose in her heart as immovable as the heavens. That purpose was to get rid of Lord Sinclair, with all his debauchery, all his chicanery, and his love of money.

All his machinations would come to naught, as far as she was the object of them. Her innocence, that had never been tarnished in any way till her contact with Sinclair, was now polished and brightly shining again, like we may for a while be enveloped in a cloud, but when we come out of it the world looks brighter than ever.

So it was with Viola. She had left New York, shaken off the dust of that city, and was being whirled like a madwoman on the earth and through the air, trying to get rid of that cruel word, fate.

Why had she been environed by such a cruel fate? With a designing mother and a more designing lover, one striving for a name, the other for a fortune, had not her life fallen in hard places?

On, on she went, and the farther she got from Sinclair the lighter seemed her burden. Like Pilgrim, she dropped a fearful weight when she dropped him. She was fast getting out of the slough of despond and into the clear light of heaven.

The fields seemed dressed in holiday attire. The winter had been a mild one, the greenness of the preceding summer had not altogether vanished, and Viola thought it was like her heart. Even Sinclair could not kill all the greenness in her heart, for with the first pure breath of heaven it revived and the flowers of

hope and contentment were beginning to bud anew.

Did her heart accuse her for the step she had taken? Never.

Lord Sinclair sat in his den, the smoke curling up around him in blue wreaths. A surly smile was on his lip.

"So the bird has flown," he said, "to realms unknown. Why did I not clip her wings of pride, of scorn, of hatred for me? Her mother, too, must be a donkey to let her slip through her fingers so easily. Young women now know more than their grandmothers. They lay out plans, and carry them out in dead of night. But where has she gone? Her mother says she has no relatives, and in her estimation every one to be noticed must be rich."

Viola had come and gone like an angel, and let us add, her mother was almost superstitious enough to think her dead.

CHAPTER VI.

UNCLE WALTER AND AUNT META.

VIOLA was welcomed at her new home, as the first spring flower is welcomed. Every one wanted her for himself. Aunt Meta said:

"Dear! dear! You came so far to see us all because a man wanted you you didn't want. After all," with a sly glance at Uncle Walter, "the men are of some account. Who can tell what they will do next, scaring beautiful women away from their homes. But you are welcome, dear. Your eyes are as blue as the bluebells that grow in the field yonder, which I dare say you will be picking before long. No roses are redder than your cheeks, and your hair is like dead gold, a crinkled, wavy mass. And so a man scared you away, so the men are come use," with another side glance at

Uncle Walter, "and you ran straight into Aunt Meta's arms."

Love shall be the cordial now to bring you to yourself again—the love of two warm hearts, flowing on like a calm stream in summer, never varying from its course.

Walter Livingstone was a well-to-do farmer, who lived just out of the city of Brattleboro, Vermont. He and his wife, Meta, were known for miles around as the most benevolent couple in the country. Childless, they had plodded on after they had buried their little rosebud of a child, to unfold in a higher clime. Now Viola would fill the vacuum in their hearts and make them bloom anew.

Viola almost felt that she had gotten into heaven. It was the next thing to it, she was free, at least her heart and body were. Her soul was pent up a little while longer till she could do some more good, perhaps make the world better by living in it.

The heart is like the mercury in the thermometer: give it a chance, surround it by a warm and genial atmosphere, and it will rise

to great heights, but take away this leavening power and down it sinks into the sand and mire.

The air was beginning to be colored with the golden tint of spring. There was a kind of mellowness about the sunshine that made you love to have it fall upon you; the sky was intensely, brightly blue.

Viola enjoyed herself like a young lamb let loose from restraint. What wonder that she found comfort in the companionship of these two gentle creatures, and of nature, with which we are all linked.

Who has not some memory that takes him back to nature as the first link, perhaps, that bound him to an invisible God? Can we read a book without having to some extent become acquainted with the author? So when we see this great book of nature, written by the hand of the Infinite, spread out before us in letters of green and gold and azure, are we not led from nature up to nature's God?

So Viola analyzed each petal of the flower, as if it were a message directly for her. "I

love you," if it had never been said to her before was said to her now, and her heart flowed out in return. Viola's especial delight was, as Aunt Meta prophesied, to gather wild flowers.

"Cultivated flowers are," said she, "like belles, they soon get *passe,* and one sates of them."

"The very lines in the wild flowers are natural, not artificial. There is no attempt to make them grow this way or that, but they are swayed by their own sweet will, or by the free air of heaven.

One day in her rambles she saw a rose growing under a fence, struggling for life, but hardly being able to gain it.

"How like my life," she said; "held down by bars and bolts till I eluded them in one moment, as in the twinkling of an eye. Love laughs at barriers, and so does unlove, I think."

CHAPTER VII.

VIOLA TURNS ARTIST.

THE lovely summer days came on and wrapped the earth in a mass of emerald and bloom, and Viola with her pencil and sketch-book in hand tried to preserve the most beautiful part of it.

The mountains, with their shifting tints of green and gold, and lavender; the woods, once perhaps like an eastern jungle, now made habitable, where brightly hued birds flit in and out, singing their love songs; the flowers scattered like stars of white and gold, purple and amethyst, upon the great bed of green that spans the earth; the silver streams, that gurgle on through meadows ripe with flowers and fruit; the blue sky above that seemed to invite

all weary travelers to look up and find solace and peace.

All this beautiful picture Viola painted in commemoration of her freedom, and of her emancipation from the thraldom of man.

But, alas! go where you will, Viola, and you will find man there. He will follow you like the dew follows the night. Transplant the loveliest women to the poles, or the uttermost parts of the earth, and, lo! man is there. He seems to be a part of woman's being, and woman the fulfillment of his.

The apple blossoms had come and gone, and fallen like pink and white shells from the upper sea, the roses' breath had begun to be its sweetest, and it had penetrated into Viola's innermost being. In fact, she was a new creature, not born of fashion, or of the will of the world, but the divine will seemed to have entered into her, making her love the very smallest thing in God's creation. Love and nature are as inseparably mixed as the air and sunshine. Viola would wander for hours in this

new Paradise, and wonder why Eve ate the apple, and was cast out of the original one.

That first Eden must have been a wonderful sight, so very near the gate of heaven that the angels went in and out. No stain of sin with its reddening hue went over it. The flowers were white, as though they were just transplanted from the heavenly garden, and streams flew by like nectar, where the fair Eve bathed only a little lower than the angels.

One breath of sin had spoiled it all. The flowers had withered away, the streams had dried up, the trees had lost their verdure, and what was promised in the bud was never fulfilled in the flower.

How much of this Eden is yet left in nature we have to imagine. Morally, of course, it is defective, and when moral blight comes, physical blight follows. Our moral nature is the light by which our nature grows; so, of course, in proportion as that light is withdrawn will the physical nature be dull and defective.

But Viola was glad it was as well with her as it was.

But would her mother seek her and compel her return? At any rate, she would make hay while the sun shone. Lord Sinclair's face should not rise like a dark cloud between her and her present happiness.

CHAPTER VIII.

AUNT META AS A MOTHER.

AUNT META was more than mother to her, and Viola's cup of happiness was almost full. The very love that had been pent up in her heart for want of a worthy object to bestow it upon now had full sway. Uncle Walter said:

"Viola has come to be a daughter to us in our old age," and he stroked the bands of her golden hair with far more fondness than if she had been her weight in gold. "Heaven has sent her to us," he said, "like a ray of sunshine to lighten our downward pathway, and we will keep her,"

"Yes," said Aunt Meta, "her mother may advertise, and hunt for her all she has a mind to, but all we will have to say is that she is not

a fit person to take care of her, and so she will not be allowed to reclaim her."

All the while Viola was free as a bird or bee to go where she was a mind to. Every nook and corner for miles and miles around was explored, and she brought forth countless treasures, and so learned more of the Great Author, whose works are manifold. If she went into the woods He was there; His foot-prints were on the grassy meadows; if she looked up at the blue sky at night she saw His words written there in letters of silver.

She had nothing now to do with the past. The future loomed up like some bright picture that she longed to get a better view of. What hopes did it hold for her that would be culminated in the highest happiness.

When the trees put forth their leaves then we say that summer is nigh. And her heart was so nigh bursting with buds that we are sure it is nearing the time of flower and fruit.

Aunt Meta was her model. On her cheeks were the roses as fresh as in her youth.

"Worry and care scare them away," she

said, "and I have not had much of either. I believe in being cheerful as long as there is anything left to lean upon. God has given us a good home, and these fields for an inheritance. Gold is something we never cared for," she said, "except the gold that lies yonder—the golden streets and the hearts of gold that are awaiting us."

Viola came in just in time to hear this last remark, her arms loaded down with May treasures.

"What wood nymph has wooed you today?" asked Aunt Meta. "Fancy, with his painted and brightly colored wings, has drawn you into his fairy bower and showered May flowers upon you, or has Love wooed you and given you some of his orange blossoms?" for so some of the white flowers seemed. "But I know you would prefer to be wooed by Fame, with its wreath of immortelles to do something so grand and beautiful that your name would be mentioned a hundred years from now, after you had crumbled into dust. I can see it in your eye, Viola, an unquenchable fire, that

leaps up, and shines, and sparkles, like the volcano, and will never be satisfied till it has reached the sky."

So Viola's thoughts went upward, and she would place her name on the highest scroll in the heavens, but would she carve it with the sculptor's knife, paint it with the artist's brush or write it with the author's pen?

There was a natural grace in everything she did, whether she walked, rode or played the piano. After all, perhaps music is her *forte,* that golden sound by which the soul's melody travels—shall we call it inspiration?

There have been inspired writers, inspired speakers; why not inspired musicians, whose touch is something more than earthly, and on the chords we rise up a degree or two higher in our lives.

So Viola sat down and played, as if her soul were in her work, her cheeks as red as the wild roses, her eyes shining like two radiant stars, her hair thrown back from her face and falling over her shoulders like a golden veil.

Are not love and youth and music associa-

ted? But where is the lover now to complete this beautiful picture? Surely you would think he would appear at the doorway, artist or hunter, in a rustic garb, his face bronzed with the reddish tints of the sun, never more to hunt if hunter; if artist, never more to need a subject for his easel.

But Viola had no thought of pleasing any one but Uncle Walter and Aunt Meta. She lived in a divine atmosphere. What need had she to seek or make acquaintances? She would bask in the sunshine like a happy child, and know no restraint. She was a part of nature, the very highest, loveliest part.

The last thing created was man and woman, so shall they hold a dominant part over inanimate nature, and nature shall be in subjection to them. What a pleasure to be in subjection to such a beautiful being as Viola, who would not harm the lowest of creatures?

How long we can live off of the sunshine, but when the night of sorrow comes how soon we droop and die, like some flowers that close their leaves at nightfall.

Ah, Viola! You can no more do without love than the earth can do without the sun; both would be a barren waste. The star of her affinity had not yet risen, but it would yet loom up in the distance, revolutionizing her thoughts, feelings and actions.

Stars have presaged wars, pestilence, famine. Why should not the star of love bring hope and courage in its train? She had been reared in affluence, idolized by her father, who had looked upon her as more than human; indulged by her mother, who had put her in the matrimonial market, and thought to exchange her for a position.

"Position is everything," said the mother. "Without position and a title, how are you better than the plebian that jostles you in the crowd, the nobody without a name or money?"

CHAPTER IX.

MRS. LIVINGSTONE PLANS TO FIND VIOLA.

"So VIOLA has disappeared," soliloquized the mother, "and I can no more get her value than I could replace one of the rich gems in the queen's diadem."

She always looked at Viola as to how much she was worth, and what she would bring in return, matrimonially. "If she were a plain or ordinary looking woman she might disappear in the throng and never be found, but she is uncommon looking. Where did you ever see such hair, so golden, and yet with an auburn tinge when the sun glints over it? Eyes like stars of blue, and yet that grow deeper and darker with every feeling and impulse, cheeks as red as wine, beside which wine is tasteless. And such lashes!—it makes you long to be

under the lash all the time; at least, so says Sinclair. I hope he is sincere, for after all Viola is my own flesh and blood. Wherever she goes she is sure to make a sensation; she is sure to be sought after for her goodness alone. I hope her loveliness will not be a snare, and make her sacrifice herself to some one unworthy of her. I never thought that Viola would leave her home, and leave me in doubt as to her whereabouts.

"But you can never account for the actions of a young woman in love. There is no more stability about them than a bee sipping honey. Now they are at the heart of one flower, now at another, but they all meet at the one great hive, home. So I suppose when Viola has sipped enough sweetness from the outside world she will return and make Sinclair happy for the remainder of his life. He will love her all the more for the short parting.

"I intend to hunt all over the United States for her, and when I find her we will both rejoice over the one sheep that was lost. I will apply to all the agencies and have a diligent

search made for her, and she shall not escape, even if I have to go in person after her."

The fond mother looked over a list of the names of her friends and acquaintances, and in the search found those of Uncle Walter and Aunt Meta, Brattleboro, Vermont.

Viola had fondly written them down, for she loved to think of these two persons, who were really her own kin, her father's flesh and blood.

"I will start north first," said the mother, "for I always believe in going upward when you can. It is well enough to go down hill when you can't help yourself. Brattleboro, Vermont, is the most northern point on my list, and thither I will go first. What a first-rate place for a lovelorn maid to hide in the mountains! But you can never quench love; it is an unquenchable fire, consuming everything that comes between it and its object. So, Viola, you need not have hidden there, if there you have hidden, for love will find you out."

And so the mother laid plans to find her daughter.

Lord Sinclair called that evening, which was just one month after Viola's departure, and he coincided in the mother's plans heartily. He either really loved Viola, or else he was anxious for her return as he would be if some one had absconded with some of his money.

The very best thing to do with a woman who has gone off like that is to let her have her own way for a while, and when she is tired of reconnoitering to fetch her back and bring her to terms.

"Viola has the very grit I had," said the mother. "When I was young I was the grittiest thing. My husband always proposed the opposite thing he wanted, and then I was sure to please him.

"And your contrariness lasts with your age," thought Sinclair, who would have proposed beginning with some nearer point than Vermont.

Intuition is often better than knowledge. Man does a thing when he knows it, woman when she believes it.

CHAPTER X.

AN UNPLEASANT MEETING.

THE purple pansies that fringed Aunt Meta's walk nodded wisely to one another, as if something unusual was going to happen. The golden sun streamed down like melted amber. The sky was like a blue lake overhead, from which was reflected all the fair things on earth, but the fairest thing was Viola, with her uncovered head, the living reality of Uncle Walter and Aunt Meta's dream.

They had dreamed of such a beautiful being living down in New York, with its stifling air, and brick walls, trying to rise above the pestilential air outside, and in her home curbed by the hand of an ambitious, ill-guided mother, having the heart's treasures bartered for a title, and then perhaps the title was not real.

The very germ of innocence in Viola had not been killed, and Aunt Meta meant to nurture it till she was repaid by the sweetly reviving graces of the heart and mind.

"She is now one of our own family," said Uncle Walter, "and we will never part with her. The wonder is how we lived so long without her."

Ah! even now some one is lurking near, unseen, though real. An enemy has entered the camp, and may any moment take her prisoner. Beautiful women have been made prisoners before to satisfy the lust and greed of wicked people. They have even been put out of the way altogether. But Viola's mother did not want to do this. She wanted to put a fetter upon her, galling for all time.

The latch clicks at the gate and an ominous shadow crosses the walk. The very clock stops and refuses to go, as it has done before in cases of death.

Viola is in the meadow, her usual resort on these lovely days of azure fairness.

Viola's mother must have seen her, for, in-

stead of entering the house, she retraces her steps and crosses the velvet patch of ground between the house and meadow.

But Viola would not have been so startled by the apparition of her mother if close behind her had not lurked the unwelcome form of Sinclair.

"Well, Viola," said the mother, "have you had a good vacation, and are you ready to come home? See what love this man," pointing to Sinclair, "has for you that he could come such a long distance after you."

But Viola wished his love had not reached so far. She was satisfied with her life as it was. She had come so far to gain freedom, and she was no more willing to give it up to a Britisher than the old New Englanders in Revolutionary days of surrendering to the English.

When she could keep the enemy at bay it was well enough, but when she was brought face to face with him she would either have to fight or resort to some stratagem to get rid of him.

The field adjoining the one in which Viola was was dotted with daisies, and they sparkled and shone till they looked like a mass of precious gems on an emerald background. Into this field Viola went, and of course Sinclair followed her. On, on, Viola went, Sinclair in her rear like a grim and ominous shadow, till they had reached nearly the end of this field, just outside of which was a small pond where the cattle drank. Beneath the velvety grass and almost hidden by it was as velvety an object. But Sinclair saw nothing.

He was about to take Viola's hand and press his suit, and perhaps thought these beautiful surroundings of nature favorable to it; but, alas, his dream was not yet to be realized, for with one bound the sleepy animal, a bull of no small dimensions, rose from his lair and rushed toward him like a wild animal that has sought and just found prey. Whether because he was a stranger, or on account of his red hair and beard, not to mention his red face, was the cause of the animal's showing fight, we do not know. At any rate, he plunged and foamed

and dived; his horns seemed to bristle up to twice their size.

Lord Sinclair's size greatly impeded his progress, so the bull had full play. He tossed him up and rolled him over like an India rubber ball. His clothes and linen were sadly demoralized, as well as himself. He swore and raved, and in the midst of his bloody and dilapidated condition Uncle Walter and Aunt Meta appeared on the scene with Viola's mother, who had gone to the house, ostensibly to leave the lovers together and to make up, really to see what plan she could arrive at with the old folks about bringing her daughter home.

As these three appeared the bull seemed to make one final lunge, fastened his horns into his victim and threw him over the fence into the pond, the blood streaming from face and hands.

"I have never seen," said Uncle Walter, "a bull and a jackass get into a fight without the bull taking all the conceit out of the jackass." And Lord Sinclair's pride had a great fall.

Viola stood a ways off, convulsed with

laughter. Surely thus far she had had her revenge. He managed to crawl out of the water, though he was in a terrible predicament. His love for the time being was cooled. What would he have given now to have avoided Viola's eyes? His clothes were dripping with water, and if Viola had had her kodak with her she would have taken his picture.

"Now," said Uncle Walter, who had gone to the house and procured his shotgun, and, pointing it at him, "leave these premises, and never show yourself here again. We do not want any thieves here, and I hear you are looking for money that does not belong to you. So, now, make tracks." And he made tracks truly, and Viola's mother followed in his wake.

"It is so wicked," she said to Uncle Walter, "to treat a lord in this way. I am sure something dreadful will happen to you. Your house will be struck by lightning or you will lose your crops."

"I am sure getting rid of such a fellow as

this ought to be followed by a blessing rather than a misfortune," said he drily.

"As for Viola, I will have her shut up in a nunnery, where she will be shorn of her golden locks as well as her wicked ways."

"Not while I have a hand to prevent it," said Uncle Walter fondly, caressing her golden hair. "I intend to keep her with me. We love her and she loves us, and we don't intend to part with her under any circumstances."

The mother saw it was useless to argue with the man in his present mood.

The whole neighborhood turned out *en masse,* and when they saw Uncle Walter with his gun they were enraged, for they thought something dreadful had happened.

Now the bedraggled form of Lord Sinclair came up, and, "Lynch him!" "Ride him on a rail!" "Duck him!" were vociferously shouted, but when they saw that he had already been ducked they desisted. But if the two had not got out of town when they did there is no knowing what might have happened.

As it was, Lord Sinclair felt very uncomfort-

able for a long time. Though his ardor was dampened, his miserly instincts were as active as ever. You would have thought the money had slipped through his fingers as well as the girl.

CHAPTER XI.

MRS. LIVINGSTONE OFFERS CONSOLATION.

THE mother solaced him as best she could, but it was cold comfort, having a suit of wet clothes clinging to you.

"I am sure Viola is heart free," said the mother; "and as soon as I can get her away from her present surroundings everything will be all right again. Do you think I am going to be fooled by an old idiot in his dotage? As soon as I put the law upon him he will squirm and cry for mercy. That is the reason I left Viola there to-day. It is that I may have my revenge. Nobody ever went against me but they were hurt in the rebound. I will sue him for abduction. Viola shall come back to New York and shine brighter than ever. I will put an end to this hypnotism. I will let poor peo-

ple know their place, and not have them meddling with rich people's affairs."

But Sinclair was miserable and refused to be comforted. His wet clothes clung to him, as a reminder of his folly, and he would gladly have changed places with some commoner man for the time being.

Viola's mother was a wonderful woman. She conjured up all sorts of bright pictures, and painted fancy till it seemed reality. She made the central figure in this drama forget his grief in his flights on fancy's wing. When he and Viola were married what a sensation it would create in society's upper kingdom! He for his nobility, Viola for her money and beauty.

"American girls," said she, "are the sweetest; they have nature to feed upon. Art has not got such a hold upon them. They are not held down by rules and forms."

"I have just had an exhibition of it," said he, "that this is a land of freedom—freedom of speech, freedom of action, freedom of thought and will. Viola is a statue of liberty

herself, as beautiful, and you could move a statue as soon."

"I never saw anything I could not move," said the mother. "I shall not leave a stone unturned till I have accomplished my purpose, though it shall be done in a decent and orderly manner."

"Was to-day's ordeal a specimen," said he, "of your way of doing things?"

"True love never runs smooth," said she. "There are ups and downs, sunshine and shadow, joy and sorrow, in the cup of all true love. It is like a stream that winds in and out, now through a mountainous road, or dark wood; now through a peaceful valley, lit with sunshine and banked with flowers; through fertile fields, ripe with the harvest; and through the barren waste, till it reaches the vast ocean; but it is the same stream all the time. So shall your love perhaps wind through all these different paths, through thorny as well as rosy roads, till it reaches the great ocean of eternity, to be swallowed up in the mighty love of God."

So the woman had a poetical side as well as

her worldly wisdom, like one part of a garment may be finely woven, the other part rough and coarse in texture.

Viola was an offshoot of her virtues not of her vices, for with all his cunning he felt that he had left a pearl behind him.

"What a beautiful gem for the crown of their old age," said he, as he thought of the elderly couple who had possession of her. "Still she is worth fighting for. Two million dollars would set off a young man's crown deucedly well, I think."

His sordid nature was aroused again. It was like working for the money trying to get Viola to consent to the marriage. He shivered and shook like one with the tremens, but he was trying to abide by the advice of the woman beside him—to accept the plain as well as the gilt side of life.

The purple sky had grown dark, and the night came on as a fit ending for the day's proceedings. They would stop at some hotel and then he would have a chance to dry his clothing and perhaps get his linen laundered.

"Women are equal to any emergency," he said. "They can help you out of any scrape or get you into it. Who would have thought in that flowery field there was an animal lurking, ready to spring at you without any provocation? Woman was, and still is, the temptress of mankind. She is beautiful and therefore she is dangerous. Viola shall not weave another net for me. I will turn the tables and weave a net for her, and when she is once in it she may beg for mercy, but I will know no mercy. If I once get her I will break her in as I would a skittish colt, with bit and bridle. I will see if she will be running away to the Green Mountains at her leisure. I wonder what plan the old lady will devise to get her back again. She is equal to anything, even to dealing with the "old fellow" himself. The money is safer in her hands, and all the time it is drawing interest. Mademoiselle is young, and beauty like hers never fades. It is of the indelible kind."

CHAPTER XII.

VIOLA DEVELOPS RARE TRAITS OF CHARACTER.

MEANWHILE Viola was waiting for the denouement of the affair with a fluttering heart. Perfectly happy where she was, she did not wish to be disturbed. A perfect nest, where innocence might sit and brood and sing its love songs to itself. She did not wish to share such a life with a man she knew so little of as she did of Sinclair.

A life that you have to keep all the time polishing and brightening the surface must be made of some poor material.

Why was he so anxious to secure her when she was opposed to him? Was it not some mercenary motive? He offered a name in place of her money. Would it not be a business arrangement after all if she should enter into

any such agreement, which she had no intention of doing? Her freedom of the past few months had strengthened this idea. Restraint was to her an irksome word, for it had always savored of injustice.

Put a pure person under the command of a wordly one, and the pure person must always suffer. To yield is their nature.

But, after all, Viola had a trait in her character that would make her rebel when the time came. That time had come. With her freedom her spirits had risen; there was an elasticity about her frame, her heart seemed to beat and bound as though possessed of new life blood. The poison had been taken out of it.

A rare plant of any kind may not bloom in a poor soil, but transplant it to a good soil and the flowers immediately appear.

So it was with Viola's heart. It now blossomed as the rose. The flowers of hope, joy, love, contentment, that had been kept in a chrysalis state, now burst forth in all their splendor, with their bright colors and scented leaves.

Uncle Walter and Aunt Meta watched her

through this state of graduation with a tender eye. They would give up their home, their fortune, but they would never give up this one woman in ten thousand. They would have to go away and leave their home, their gold would tarnish, but the beauty of the soul endures forever.

CHAPTER XIII.

LORD SINCLAIR AND MRS. LIVINGSTONE GET BACK TO NEW YORK.

VIOLA'S mother and Sinclair had got back to New York.

"Viola need not consider herself free from my authority and discipline," said the mother. "I have no intention of letting those two old people ride over and outwit me. I will apply to the authorities and proceed with the proper means of her restoration to home. She is a minor, and therefore I have a perfect right to claim her. The officers of the law will have no tomfoolery or dillydallying. I tell you these common people would be the ruination of good society, plundering, kidnapping, holding a person's friends for the sake of a reward, which they shall never receive. On the contrary, I

intend to make them pay if it takes their home. If I could I would wipe them off of the face of the earth. Viola shall not grow up with them and have their country manners instilled into her. What! Am I to lose all her training and education? Why, the thing is preposterous!"

She consulted Sinclair as to what plan she should pursue, but his advice, after the reception she had given him, was to let her alone.

"If you let her alone she will come home of her own accord when the novelty of the situation has worn off, but try to drive her and she will be like some contrary animal and be sure to go in an opposite direction. Women like above all things to have their own way. She is the guide and leader of man, say what you will. Talk of the woman being in subjection. It is the man. She speaks and he obeys. Her beauty, her loveliness, act like magic, and her will is done."

Viola's mother thought:

"If he is willing to give her up so easily I am not willing to give him up. Am I to strug-

gle all my life for a name, and then give up the pursuit when it is about to be conferred upon me, or my daughter, which amounts to the same thing. Of course I will share with her the honors of foreign society and travel. It will be like the old story of Ruth and Naomi, 'Where thou goest I will go, where thou lodgest I will lodge, and there will I be buried.' "

Lord Sinclair was willing to agree with her as far as the burying was concerned.

"Women," said he, "are like some kind of fruit. Some are sour, some are sweet, some are pleasant to the eye and taste, some fall into your mouth if you but touch them, some are away out of your reach."

Why should such a pure star as Viola be followed by such a satellite, managing, maneuvering, striving to get into the upper strata, where dwell the select few?

All the while Viola was blooming like a peach blossom in flowery Vermont, with no more care than the gentle breezes that sighed in and out among the trees. Her sparkling

complexion owed its glow to the healthfulness of the atmosphere, the freedom of her heart beatings and the unceasing love of those around her.

Where there is a decadence of love there is always a decadence of health. Love is a healthy little god, who bathes his wings at the fountain of perpetual youth and springtime.

So Viola's face glowed with the very wine of youth. She began to be a conspicuous figure at the church, and at all the church gatherings, a very pearl stranded on their shores. from the sea of fashionable society. She played the church organ, and her music seemed to draw them out of themselves and up into a pure, serene atmosphere, exempt from daily toil and care. Many a rustic swain's heart beat faster to the rhythm of her music. She was cultivated—that was the reason.

Cultivation makes all the difference in the world, from a cultivated field to a cultivated person. The former they understood very well. The ploughing, the weeding, the sowing of seed; but when it came to the breaking up

of the heart, for the good seed to enter, the removal of the weeds of the world, the ploughing and furrowing by the hand of God, of these they were ignorant.

What had this beautiful creature to do with suffering? Nothing. She was a bright spot in their otherwise dull existence, the leaven we hope that is to leaven the whole lump.

Many a man has married a woman for her good looks, but when we add to it learning it makes the gem of intrinsic value.

New York society has lost a belle, Vermont society has gained a Christian and a noble woman.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE MINISTER FALLS IN LOVE.

THE young minister's heart ached beneath his waistcoat more than was caused by his ministerial cares. He could ask a man to become a Christian, but he could never ask this lovely woman to share his humble lot. He would feel like a thief if he did. Perhaps he had heard of the story of how she had been bartered away for a title that was, perhaps, nothing more than tinsel; how her heart had revolted at the idea of being a wife in name only.

When a woman loves a man, whatever she does for him is but the outflowing of her heart into its natural channel, but when these little acts are forced the arteries become clogged by selfishness and prevent a free passage of love from heart to heart.

Viola had no intention of entering into any such agreement. In fact, her heart was born for love, and she meant to nestle among the New England hills till she could meet with her ideal presence, one of nature's noblemen, not with outward signs of a high sounding name and glittering baubles that perish with the using, but the hidden man of the heart.

The trees were heavy with foliage and the plants bright with flowers. Viola lived among them. She loved the Author, and how could she be nearer to Him than by associating with His works? She inherited the sunshine and thrived under it. Her breath was as sweet as the roses, her complexion as fair as the lily, her eyes like twin violets.

What lover could have stood unmoved before her? Even Lord Sinclair's heart of stone must have softened. What mother would seek to warp or cripple such a life? Would she continue to carry out her purpose of making her submit to Sinclair's advances?

We are never so cowardly as in the affairs of the heart. We may expose the body to dan-

ger, but when the heart is at stake we tremble and shake lest something may turn the tables against us.

So Viola's heart fluttered like leaves in a cyclone. And was it not a fit comparison to her mother's wrath? She had paid her one visit, but would she escape from the second so easily? Her vindictive nature would never be satisfied till she got possession of Viola. She was like so much money that she wanted to speculate with that had escaped out of her hands, at least temporarily.

She did not know what she had to deal with in the persons of Viola's uncle and aunt. They were of the good New England stuff, that would never give in one iota to friend or foe when they were in the wrong. They descended from old pioneer stock that had fought for the starry flag, and they were well able to defend a woman's honor and save a woman's heart.

The days had worn a heavenly aspect since Viola came, and were they to go back to the common routine of childlessness and unlove?

"We never knew what living was before,

and if the mother ever tries to wrest from us the mainspring of our lives," for so they looked upon Viola, "we will defeat her," said Aunt Meta.

"And we are well able to," said Uncle Walter. "Viola is not obliged to live with her mother when there is no congeniality between them."

If these old people's actions were as forcible as their words the mother would never be avenged.

"If it comes to the worst," said the old couple, "we will take Viola to Europe. In foreign society and travel the past will be buried, the present one golden day of recreation, the future something to look forward to, brilliant with prospects and bright with hope and love. Where will the court beauties be when Viola is around? They will have to hide their heads. They will find that their only beauty lies in their coronets."

"We have money enough and to spare," said Uncle Walter. "We will have her learn painting of some of the best masters in Europe.

She has a talent in that direction, and no knowing what the result may be. We have only to sow the seed and wait for the harvest. Who would think to look at the barren ground that it would yield flower and fruit and golden grain? It is the action of the sun and rain and heat upon it. So when the sunshine of love, that has so long been denied her, shines into her heart we may expect paradoxical results."

So while her mother and Sinclair were planning for her discomfort, her uncle and aunt were planning for her happiness. She would never return to the living tomb, her former home; for, like the butterfly that has escaped from the chrysalis state and spread its gorgeous wings of purple and gold and scarlet, so was she content to bask in the sunshine of the present and let the dead past bury its dead. With the resurrection of hope she had become a new being, and from the brilliant, polished, sparkling Viola we would never know that she had been in the fossil state.

A pure atmosphere is all that is needed to

make a healthy being, physical or moral. Love sways human beings more than men will admit. It is the key that unlocks the heart. It is the basis of all earthly happiness, the foundation of heaven.

So, when the clouds had gone out of her sky, she could look straight into the face of God and know it was all His love that had brought about the result and raised up these two dear friends in time of trouble.

What an outlook for her to go to Europe! The old world was something that she had never explored: the antiquities of art, statuary and sculpture, by those who have themselves moldered into clay; paintings and drawings of the old school; hidden relics of literature and wisdom, covered with the dust of centuries. To what depths she might go in this intellectual sea and fish up extinct specimens, to satisfy her taste and feast upon! Did ever girl have such a prospect? How much better it was than marrying a lord and looking through his eyes at everything, as she probably would had to have done.

CHAPTER XV.

THE TRIO SET SAIL FOR EUROPE.

THE sun was just bursting from its mighty tomb, and its rays glint over the water till it looks like a sea of glass where all the colors of the rainbow are commingled. The waters dance to the tune of Old Sol, and Viola's heart beats time to it as she and her party step on board the "Cymric," bound for Europe. The old couple look as happy as two young people on their first voyage. Viola has been a sort of youth renewer to them. A look into her violet eyes seemed to bring back all the spring-time of their youth, as well as the golden mid-summer of their days.

"If Viola's mother goes to look for her again in our home," said they, "she will find the nest empty, and the bird will have flown so far

away they will never be able to locate her. First we will be at this town, then at that, for I intend Viola to see everything there is to see, and it will be like our second sight, everything will be so fresh and beautiful to us. I have heard that people might hide away in London and be as free from discovery as though they did not exist."

So to London they went, and truly there were people enough to hide away amongst, if that was all. People were hurrying along in such crowds that all Viola could think of was bees hurrying to their hives, loaded with sweetness or with sorrow.

But it was now like the dawning of day to Viola. To be free, to be allowed to go where she liked, to not be under the surveillance of her mother or Sinclair, was joy enough. Prosperous winds had wafted them across the ocean, and in the midst of it Viola was owner of all she surveyed. She had no one claiming this or that, and when land hove in sight she hoped it would prove an asylum for her grief and a refuge from her fears.

Here she would find an outlet for her genius that had been pent up like a river. The rainbow-hued sunsets would find their way upon paper as sure as they were painted on the sky. The cathedral-like hills and grotesque valleys would be immortalized, so that the song of their praises would never die. The lovely face of nature must be photographed as it was, with its rivers like mirrors of crystal on an emerald surface and the trees and rocks that kept guard over all this beautiful scene. All this imagery of nature would live forever in her breast as well as on canvas. Love never dies, and who so great a lover of nature as she? Perhaps the great love that in other natures is transferred to man she gave to nature, knowing it would ever give back a return.

Perhaps in her wanderings she would tread in the footprints of a Milton or Byron, and who more worthy than she? Poets are always lovers of nature, for how can you write of anything unless you love it, and what poet has not made nature his theme from time immemorial? It is old, but ever new.

After they had done London they would go to Paris, the land of beauty, where the women are so well formed their clothes always fit them; where, after she had been stored with knowledge, she would do the polishing and brightening up. It would be like adding the frosting to a pudding, this adding the ornaments to her person, after she was well dressed down with facts. And perhaps in their airy wanderings they would be wafted into Italy, the land of song, where every motion is poetry, every word musical.

CHAPTER XVI.

IS MUSIC HER FORTE?

After all, who shall say that music is not her *forte?*—that something that lifts us up from every-day realities, the link that binds us to another sphere. Without it how could we be any better than the animal? With it, if we are not lifted into the company of angels, we can get a foretaste of what heaven must be. In Italy, where song flows like a river, she would lave and be baptized into membership with its fraternity.

Where were skies so blue, where were sunsets so gorgeous? The sun shone in the sky like a great jewel, till the waters of the Mediterranean were tempered by it and the air made soft and genial. God seemed to have used the concentration of His power to make

everything shine and sparkle with undue splendor.

Viola hoped He would use it upon her and make her what she wanted to be. And she was beautiful enough to fit all of these elegant surroundings. Her hair had added to it a bronze tint, a deeper rose flushed her cheek.

"Perhaps," said she, "this is the land flowing with milk and honey."

Here the wine seemed to flow naturally or with just a little pressing. Why should she not think it to be the New Jerusalem?

But all this ground was not gone over in one year or two. It took longer than that to satisfy the inquiring mind of this fair scholar, born with a taste for everything grand, noble, elevating. Born with a gift, almost inspiration, for some great object in life, she will when that object is determined upon shake the very world of science to its center.

Woman, who has never had her place in the mechanism of life, is fast filling up this niche or that, causing some wheel to move onward, being the motive power in this or that new en-

terprise. Why should not woman, who is the author of all beings, have some part in the controlling power? What woman if put in office would pocket the funds of a bank? Not one out of a hundred thousand.

Still, Viola had no aspirations for any public office, neither would she ever shine with borrowed light. Perhaps she had a certain longing for fame, that fadeless wreath of immortelles that survives even the tomb—to have your words repeated by other lips when you are cold and still. And there was a good streak in her nature.

If a musician, she would by her sweet strains awaken others to a longing for a higher existence. If an authoress, she would shine like a star of the first magnitude, to lead others onward and upward.

Milton will never die, or Byron, or Cowper. They have passed on to another stage of existence, but do we not hear them speak every day?

If an artist, will not her works follow her through all time? Putting beautiful pictures of this world on canvas, may not a little glory

from the other immortalize them? So we let this beauty-loving soul roam on in imagination in pleasant places. What if she once in a while enters the clouds? She has passed the desert and entered the fertile valley that blossoms as the rose. What if she stoops to pluck one once in a while? For she can stoop as well as soar. So many a beautiful soul in disguise is raised up by her fair hand and transplanted in the heavenly garden.

What other girls would have made a frolic of Viola turned to valuable account. She did not go to Europe simply for the purpose of saying she had been there, but she was bound to shine wherever she was. Her sky is now bright with promise. Uncle Walter hired the best masters to teach her, and they have the best material to work with, so we must expect glorious results.

Music is to her the very breathings of her soul, and not a mere form gone through. In fact she digests music, and what would lie in other breasts a sodden, unassimilated mass, goes through every part of her moral being,

elevating, purifying, making a better woman of her. For is not music ennobling? In a music-loving nature are not the baser forms of manhood subdued. It formed a golden cord between her and Uncle Walter and Aunt Meta, binding them in closer union and sympathy. They would not part with their newfound treasure for all the mothers in the world, and Viola's mother was a host in herself.

She would teach the miserable beggars that had carried Viola off that they had better consulted her. Ah! she forgot in the years she had disowned them that their fortunes had increased into a large sum. A rolling stone gathers no moss, and that had been her case. She must go every year to this or that fashionable resort, attired in the richest clothes, so the fortune her husband left her had no chance to increase, but had somwhat diminished, while Uncle Walter and Aunt Meta had stuck to the old homestead in Vermont, and it was green with the memory of the dear departed ones. And one day as they were growing old a vision had appeared to them of the loveliest

woman in the world. She seemed to bring all sunshine and no clouds.

Wise woman, she had left them behind her. In the case of Sinclair she had got rid of both shadow and substance. He was a coward at heart. He had once braved Viola's wrath, and it had been too much for him. He would like to get possession of her, or rather of her fortune, if he could do it without running the risk of personal danger. But he must leave it to a woman—woman who is so good at planning—to play the game for him.

CHAPTER XVII.

VIOLA'S FLIGHT DISCOVERED.

VIOLA'S mother had found out from good authority that Viola had fled the country, no doubt beguiled by her designing relatives.

Ah! she did not know that love had been the spark that lit the flame between them. 'Twas love that bore them over the blue ocean to a land of flower and song. The mother had never been able to reach her heart, that sanctum in which dwelt all the priceless virtues, better than rubies; but the old couple had as surely got possession of them as that they were there. Pride was the great stone at the door of her daughter's heart, which, if the mother had rolled away, she would have beheld her in all her innocence and purity. Ambition was her god, to be something more than ordinary.

While her mother and Sinclair were thinking of the best means of assuaging their grief and of righting their wrongs Viola was watching an Italian sunset.

"I hope that my life may go out like that," she said, "with as much glory. Then I shall not dread the closing of life's day."

The scarlet and amber, and gold, and purple seemed to melt away into something brighter and better beyond.

"And that," said Viola, "must be heaven. The very gates of pearl turn crimson with its glory. What if the day has been stormy if at evening time there shall be light? The sun dips into the sea till it changes it into a bed of crimson glass."

Viola came so near being an artist she could not help admiring all these beautiful scenes in nature. The stars came out like angel's eyes, blinking and winking, to watch over her as long as she chose to sit there and enjoy this heavenly panorama. Music was the outlet of her soul, and such a soul always turns heavenward.

As the magnetic needle always points northward, so the Christian's sight is always directed upward. No matter how beautiful the earth may be, though covered with a robe of velvet and dotted with gems from all parts of the floral kingdom, still it is but sparsely decorated, compared with the worlds He has sent forth to traverse space and speak of His infinitude in a thousand different tongues.

No wonder Viola never grew weary in studying the Great Author. Love was the subject of every theme. Love had set all these jewels in the heavens from the foundation. She might read many a book by man on the heavens, but she could never get such a dissertation as this spread out before her by His own hand.

Viola's uncle and aunt expect to see her one of the leaders of the musical world before they die. She has led them into bright paths and pleasant places, and they are only waiting to see their queen crowned before their departure. Viola had gone on from one stage of progress to another, learning from the best

masters in England, France, Germany and Italy. From one she got the principles of music, from another the touch, from another the taste, from another the melody.

"Our bird shall be full fledged," said Farmer Livingstone.

Her mother had no more idea of her talents than she had of undiscovered gold. It was the same to her. Did she not keep her under, domineering over her, treading upon her heart-strings. But it is hard to kill the seeds of good. The woman that was in her would rise up above the false accusations of her mother. Like a ray of sunlight, born to give light, it was hard to put it out. Her mother had only seen her in the bud, but if she had seen her in the flower would she have recognized her own offspring?

When her heart was closed, she had no one to open it to, but now all the sweet graces of her mind and soul had expanded with all the rich coloring that true friendship gives. Hers was no blighted life, spite of all her hindrances and reverses. Love will always do its perfect

work. The love of these two old people had made her heart perpetually green, for there was no drouth of love with them. They had been father and mother to her.

CHAPTER XVIII.

MRS. LIVINGSTONE AND SINCLAIR FOLLOW VIOLA.

BUT even now, fair maiden, a plot is brewing to sap your life of its joy, to rob you of your happiness. The mother has proposed, and Sinclair has accepted, a trip across the Atlantic. His greed is such that he would follow a woman with money around the world; and the woman, for the sake of a name, would take a trip to the poles, or climb the Alps, and no doubt in either case she would gain one.

Meanwhile Viola had grown to be a star of the first magnitude in the musical sky. It needed no opera glass or telescope to discover her. Would they not pick her out at once as the woman for whom they were looking? Would not the mother claim her by right of

kin, and try to force her into a marriage with Sinclair?

"I will make a 'Lady' of her," said she, "before I take her home. I will teach her not to be running off with aged people of doubtful relations, without my consent."

Was this beautiful woman with all the bright plumage of a prima donna to be shorn of it in a night, and when she cried peace and safety, was sudden destruction to come upon her?

Fear not, you are so far above them in a mental way they can never reach you. They may envy you, as they envy the angels' flight, but they can never overtake it.

What does a common mind care for the fairest picture, or the best production of art? Born to grovel, they are satisfied with the sensual pleasures of life. Place them in heaven and they would have no one to associate with. So this fair rose had been transplanted so far out of their reach that not even her perfume could reach them.

Still, you say, the worm sometimes follows the flower and eats away its life and beauty.

But love shall counteract it—the pure love of these two aged people. Like the ruby and golden sunset bespeaks a bright to-morrow, so her sun had set on her past life, leaving all storms behind.

But her mother and Sinclair had one commendable trait—perseverance. They had come to look for her and they would do so till they found her. Like a lost gem of intrinsic value tossed up on some foreign shore, they would hunt for her with unabated zeal.

Riches take wings and fly away. Truly, this had been the case with Viola's.

They boarded a White Star line steamer direct for Liverpool one golden May morning. The earth seemed to have donned her loveliest mantle in which to wish them godspeed. If Sinclair failed now he would be a ruined man. The very lips of Viola would ruin or save him. He had no doubt that the mother, who was so good at diplomacy, would carry out the scheme well, so into her hands he committed himself, while the whole ocean became one glittering shining mass of prospective gold.

A fortune hunter is never a desirable person. The very sweetness of love is lost in the desire for the actual. So while Sinclair is building castles whose foundations are money Mrs. Livingstone is laying plans of a different nature. Not but what money is in her estimation an essential element in worldly happiness. She thinks if she can bring about this marriage she can come in contact with some of the first families in Europe, the *elite,* the nobility.

"Viola would be the very person," said she, "to deck a crown. Her beauty and wit, inherited from me, would dazzle and sparkle till all men would fall down and worship her. Perhaps her coming to Europe is just the thing to bring about this result. Sinclair says he is a near relative of the King of Germany, and who knows, if I can bring about this alliance, and we might call it a triple alliance"—for she always included herself in the bargain—"who knows but what a few generations from now some of our line may sit upon the throne. That would be well worth the money I have

spent on him, and if I do not live to see it it will be a consolation to think of."

And to tell the truth the woman was never happier than when she was laying some grand scheme for her aggrandizement or future emolument.

The ship sped on its way like a white winged messenger of love or hate, joy or sorrow, content or misery. The foam was thrown out each side like a bridal trousseau, and the heavens seemed to smile upon it. The angry cloud had not yet risen from which the storm was to descend that would shake the ship to its centre, and when it did come Viola's mother was a frightened woman. She found that her house was built upon the sand, or upon something less stable, and she was drifting hither and thither at the mercy of the waves, now mountain high, now almost buried beneath the briny deep.

The conscience is the thermometer of the moral nature. If the conscience is right everything goes on evenly, not too hot or too cold. But we must say this woman's con-

science needed regulating, else she would not have quailed so under divine wrath.

Even Viola, frail flower though she was, would have stood it all without a shudder. What grander scene for her artist mind than a storm at sea, where the giant waves leap up like snow-capped mountain crests, as if defying the elements, or urging them on to greater fury, where there is nothing to ward off the storm, as the mountains and trees do on land, but where old ocean lashes himself and foams till he has exhausted his fury. In and out the lightning leaps and darts, like tongues of forked fire in which an angry God speaks his wrath, and the thunder seems like the death knell to frightened souls. But the after beauty, when the sun shines forth and transforms the drops of water into gems of all the colors of the rainbow, makes up for all the terror of the storm.

So Viola, with her highly impressionable nature, would have regarded it. But her mother and Sinclair were cast in a different

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mold, and if Viola hopes never to meet Sinclair again it is no more than natural.

But, alas for human expectations. Her uncle had been called back to London on account of some home business, some property he was about to sell, and one evening as the trio were walking in one of the prominent art galleries who should meet them face to face but Sinclair. Had some of the pictures come to life and stepped out of their frames, their consternation could not have been greater. What ill wind had wafted him hither, and lo, behind him like a grim and omnious shadow Viola beheld her mother.

Had the sea given up its dead, for had not Viola buried all thought of him when she came to the Old World?

Viola would have brushed by them, but her mother was too quick for her.

"I thought I would find you here," she said. "for I knew your fondness for pictures and folderol. Now you can come back to the natural and embrace me."

(She weighed well on into the hundreds.)

"And if you want to take pictures you can take one of your future husband," was her mental comment.

ButViola, instead of taking a picture of him would rather have all thoughts of him removed from her.

Viola's face was the most beautiful one in the art gallery. White as marble, her lovely profile shone with unearthly beauty, as she said:

"Mother, I love you, but I cannot take this man into my heart, for I know that he is false. He is a fortune hunter, and his profligacy shows on every feature of his face. Would you barter your daughter for a name when that name is a stolen one, for he is no more a lord than Uncle Walter is, and not half as much. Of this I have inquired, and have absolute proof."

CHAPTER XIX.

VIOLA CONFESSES HER LOVE.

THE next day, in conversing with her mother, Viola said:

"I love a young artist, Henry Vaughan, who has more in one inch of his head than all of Sinclair's, which is so large it seems to be a waste of space. Henry paints flowers beautifully, and is fast winning a name in the world of art. Our tastes blend so together, is it not natural we should love each other?"

Had the mother come so far to be converted, and did it take all of the water of the Atlantic to baptize her? But her sins were many. How had her idol fallen, a broken bit of clay, and it lay shattered at her feet.

How would Sinclair defend himself against the charges of Viola? Alas! like the coward he was he did not remain to defend himself,

but went to ply his nefarious art in pastures new. He did not often have to deal with the bright girl Viola was. Sinclair unknown was a different person from Sinclair found out. Then he had the braggadocio of the coward; now the places that had known him knew him no more. He knew that Viola had the courage and power to have him dealt with by law. To elude her he fled to parts unknown.

Love makes more difference in a person's appearance that anything else in the world. Under its influence Viola grew beautiful like the flower grows in the bright sunshine. All the virtues of her mind expanded and blossomed out, and her body was a perfect setting for such a soul. The liquid depths of her eyes were full of that wonderful light that is born only of inward satisfaction.

She had been acting a part, and now she was her own natural self again.

The pearl that had been stranded on a foreign shore was picked up as bright and shining as ever, and that is always the beauty of the genuine article. No matter what its sur-

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roundings are, to what depths of moral filth it may have been subjected, when seen it always shines the brighter from the contrast.

Viola had tried to throw off the contaminating influence of Sinclair, and so sought an asylum in the verdant hills of England, the flowering vales of France, and in Italy, where song bursts forth like the volcano, born of an inward fire. She hungered and thirsted for music and longed to be perfected in it.

It seemed to her a part of heaven that had not been taken from us by the fall.

She would study as she never had done before, now that the one obstacle to her happiness was removed, and we soon see her a star of the first magnitude in the musical sky. She was fit to go upon the stage, but she would never go there, her modest nature shrinking from such a life. She could win honors enough in private circles and in her home, that sanctum where every virtue would be cultivated, every grace nurtured, and when the home is attractive we do not have to seek outside amusement to make us happy.

CHAPTER XX.

VIOLA'S WEDDING.

ANOTHER year perfected Viola in the art of music. Travel had broadened her views and given her an insight into all the details of culture and artistic merit. On the ripples of her music you were carried into a higher strata of thought and feeling, and on the golden sound you loved to linger, forgetful for the time being of the dross and sensualism beneath.

Perhaps her mother, too, is satisfied, knowing that Viola has won a name all her own, not by marriage to lord or duke, but achieved by natural merit and careful study.

Henry Vaughan is also fast achieving fame as an artist, his pictures are so truthful and lifelike. He painted Viola's picture and after seeing it, Uncle Walter said:

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"It almost speaks, and you feel like gathering the roses from cheek and lips, they are so fresh and natural."

In this propitious atmosphere Mrs. Livingstone has obtained new views of life, and by her association with Viola has got an insight into the inner workings of her nature, the more of which she sees the more there is to admire. The superficial side of life was all that she had been wont to look at or rest upon. Now that structure had given way, and she must find something more substantial for her hopes and desires to rest upon.

She found that kings and queens live in many a home without throne or coronet, their kingdom to do good to all within their reach. So Uncle Walter and Aunt Meta and Viola had risen in her estimation the longer she was in contact with them, and the more she saw of their beautiful lives the more she longed to be like them.

The following spring the party returned to America, and two months afterward there was a grand wedding at Viola's home.

Uncle Walter gave away the bride, and his bridal gift, a necklace of pearls, was prized more highly by Viola than anything else she received, for had she not been sheltered by him when she had no place to go, and been saved from being sacrificed on the altar of mammon by his great love, as strong and pure as gold?

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